

Statement of Community Involvement

Preferred Options Consultation

January 2005



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FOREWORD

New local guidelines are being prepared by the Council to outline how we intend to plan for new homes, jobs and other development in Charnwood over the next 10 years or so. In one way or another planning affects all of us as individuals, whether it is our neighbour's proposed extension or larger proposals for new roads or housing estates. We are keen to involve as many local groups, organisations and individuals in helping to shape future development in the Borough.

As a first step we have prepared this Statement of Community Involvement outlining how we propose to involve residents, businesses, groups and organisations in preparing Charnwood's Development Framework and planning applications. We consulted key stakeholders and other groups on a draft of the document in October 2004.

As a Council we are committed to open, honest and effective communication with our stakeholders and partner organisations and crucially the communities we serve. It is hoped that through effective participation a broad consensus on the planning strategy for Charnwood can be reached.

We hope you will consider the contents of this document and let us have your comments, the closing date for which is Friday 11th March 2005. We will consider any comments received and they will help us prepare a final version which we propose to submit to the Secretary of State in May. At this stage there will be the opportunity to formally object to the Council's proposed consultation arrangements. If necessary an examination chaired by an independent Inspector will be held to consider any objections.



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'C. MacLeod'.

Councillor Cameron MacLeod
Lead Member for Planning

HOW TO COMMENT ON THIS DOCUMENT

The document includes a number of questions on different aspects of the proposed approach to consultation. We would welcome your general comments and responses to the specific questions.

All comments should be made on the reply form. Further copies of the reply form can be obtained from:

- The Council's web site www.charnwood.gov.uk;
- From the Planning Policy Team on 01509 634769 or email localplans@charnwood.gov.uk;
- From the Council Offices, Southfields, Loughborough, the Service Shop County Hall, Glenfield, Leicester and libraries throughout the Borough;

The form can also be completed and returned online at www.charnwood.gov.uk.

Completed forms should be returned to:

Planning Policy, Borough Of Charnwood, Southfields, Southfield Road, Loughborough, Leicestershire. LE11 2TN

No later than Friday 11th March 2005

If you would like to obtain copies in Braille, on audio tape or large print, please contact us by telephoning 01509 634769 or email localplans@charnwood.gov.uk

If you would like to have the content of any part of this document explained to you in your own language, please ring 01509 634769

Gujarati

આ દસ્તાવેજના સમાવેશમાથી જો તમને કોઈ પણ ભાગની તમારી ભાષામા સમજણ જોઈતી હોયતો, મહેરબાની કરી અને 01509 634769 પર ફોન કરશો.

Hindi

यदि आप चाहते हैं कि आपको इस दस्तावेज के किसी भी भाग का विवरण आपकी अपनी भाषा में बताया जाए, तो कृपया 01509 634769 पर फ़ोन कीजिए।

Bengali

আপনি যদি এই দলিলের (document) যেকোন বিষয়ের ব্যাখ্যা আপনার নিজস্ব ভাষায় পেতে চান, তাহলে অনুগ্রহ করে 01509 634769 নাম্বারে টেলিফোন করুন।

INTRODUCTION

This paper outlines how Charnwood Borough Council intends to involve the local community and key organisations in preparing the Local Development Framework (LDF) for the Borough. It also outlines the arrangements for consultation on significant applications for planning permission.

Local planning authorities are required to produce a Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) under Part 2 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. The final version of the SCI will be subject to independent examination. The purpose of the examination will be to consider the “soundness” of the SCI. The criteria the independent inspector will use to test soundness are set out at Appendix I. This draft SCI aims to demonstrate how these key criteria will be met. Once adopted, all local development documents prepared by the Council will need to follow the procedures for consultation and engagement set out in this document.

The minimum requirements for consultation on the LDF are set out in the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004. The timescales for preparing the LDF are tight and some documents will be produced alongside the preparation of the SCI. It is not possible to delay the preparation of key documents until the SCI is in place. In advance of the adoption of the SCI, Government guidance advises that Councils should meet minimum standards for consultation as set out in Regulations. The SCI shows how the Council will meet these minimum requirements. It also outlines what the Council could do in addition.

WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP

The Government is committed to a planning system that is transparent, promotes participation and involvement, is accessible and accountable. To effectively deliver sustainable development, local communities need to be involved in developing the vision for their areas.

It is **not** about providing information and consulting on proposals that have already been developed. It **is** about active participation to develop options and proposals. Effective community participation involves:

- **informing-** notifying communities about policies and proposals;
- **participating-** enabling communities to put forward their ideas and participate in developing proposals and options;
- **consulting-** on formal proposals;
- **feeding back-** letting people know how their comments have been considered.

The Council supports these principles and is committed to:

Open, honest, effective communication with our staff, local and national media, our stakeholders and partner organisations and crucially the communities we serve.

Council Communications Strategy

Through the Community Strategy, the Council along with public service providers, statutory agencies, businesses, voluntary organisations and the local community, is committed to acting in

partnership so that there is a more integrated and effective approach to improving quality of life in the Borough.

The Council's Corporate Plan recognises the importance of partnership working. The Council can achieve far more with the active support of residents and organisations in the area as partners in making Charnwood an even better place to live and work.

It is hoped that through effective participation a broad consensus on the planning strategy for Charnwood can be reached, building on the shared objectives and aspirations already established by the Community Strategy. Inevitably planning, by its very nature, will involve some hard choices being made that will not be supported by all. It is the role of the Council as local planning authority to make these choices. Consultation cannot be used as an excuse to avoid making difficult decisions.

EXISTING APPROACHES TO CONSULTATION- REVIEW OF PROCEDURES

The Borough Council has been committed to involving the local community and other groups in the preparation of various policy documents for the Borough including the Corporate Plan, Economic Development Strategy and the Local Plan. The preparation of previous local plans, including the Loughborough, Soar Valley and more recently the Borough of Charnwood Local Plan, have all involved extensive consultation going some way beyond the statutory requirements.

In developing the SCI it is useful to review these approaches to consultation to look at what has worked and what has not and also to consider possible new approaches to consultation and engagement.

Previous local plan consultation exercises have included:

- Leafleting of households throughout the Borough;
 - Video tape presentation;
 - Presentations to key groups;
 - Use of Planning Aid- providing free and independent advice and support to community groups and individuals unable to afford to employ a planning consultant;
 - Touring exhibitions visiting libraries and village halls;
 - Documents and information made available at the Council Offices and libraries throughout the Borough;
 - Documents and information placed on the Council's web site;
 - Letters and documentation sent to statutory consultees, Town and Parish Councils and other local organisations;
 - Notices in the local press at key stages;
 - Press releases.
-

An assessment of the advantages and disadvantages of these techniques and the costs involved is set out at Appendix 2. If the success of a consultation exercise were to be measured solely in terms of the number of responses then consultation on the Borough of Charnwood Local Plan, attracting over 30,000 representations (one of the highest nationally for a local plan) would be deemed a successful exercise. However, this scale of response was due largely to local resident concerns about one particular local plan proposal for a mixed-use development at Birstall. The scale of response also reflected the efforts of the Parish Council and local action groups in raising local awareness of the proposal.

Analysis of responses to previous local plan exercises highlights a number of issues:

- Limited response from Loughborough residents/ groups despite the plan including significant major development proposals;
- limited response from ethnic minority groups;
- concerns over lack of publicity given to sites and proposals promoted by objectors as alternatives to the local plan proposals.

In general terms leafleting of households has been an effective way of communicating information to the local community. However full coverage needs to be ensured and leaflets produced need to be of sufficient quality to attract interest.

Exhibitions and presentations vary in their success depending on the venue and the degree of prior publicity given to them. Traditional venues such as libraries and village halls are perhaps less successful. The Council will work with Town and Parish Councils to identify the best locations for public exhibitions and presentations. Because of the resource intensive nature of exhibitions and presentations the Council may look to use a smaller number of key venues to cover a group of settlements.

Experience of the use of a video presentation for the Consultation Draft Local Plan suggests that this is not a cost effective option. New approaches involving the use of CD/DVD may be an area to consider. Ipswich Borough Council produced an interactive CD, which was considered to be a success.

Mailshots to identified groups and interests is an effective consultation method. The Council has a database of some 500 key local groups and interests.

It is not just the method of consultation but also the content of documents that is important. Feedback from local plan respondents has highlighted concerns over how accessible and understandable planning policy documents are. It is important that jargon is avoided and documents are readable. The Council will look to make documents more accessible and will consider the use of newspaper style and other formats wherever possible – particularly in discussing issues and options.

WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP TO DELIVER A CHARNWOOD DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

The key stages in the preparation of a Charnwood Local Development Framework, including the preparation of development plan documents (DPDs) and supplementary planning documents (SPDs) are illustrated in figure 1 with an indicative timeline for the preparation of the key DPDs showing when some of the stages are likely to take place. Timescales for producing SPDs will vary depending on the document being produced. The table also shows the stages in the Sustainability Appraisal of issues and options as they emerge. The following sections detail how groups and individuals will be informed, consulted, provided with feedback at these key stages, and most importantly how they can participate in the development of options and proposals. In each section we outline what the regulations require us to do as a minimum, and what the Council will do in addition.

	Preparing DPDs	Sustainability Appraisal (SA)	DPD/ SA Timeline	Preparing SPDs
Informing and feeding back Participation Consultation	Pre Production <ul style="list-style-type: none"> evidence gathering and informal consultation on issues with key stakeholders. 	Stage A Consultation on scope of appraisal and key issues and options	Sept- Dec 04	Pre- Production <ul style="list-style-type: none"> evidence gathering and informal consultation on issues with key stakeholders.
	Production <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consultation with community and stakeholders on issues and options; 6 week public participation on preferred options. 	Stages B to D Develop SA consulting Stakeholders. Consult on Issues/ Options and initial SA Consult on Final SA report along with preferred options	Jan- Mar 05 Sept- Oct 05	Production- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4-6 week consultation on draft SPD.
	Independent Examination <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6 week consultation on submission document; 6 week consultation on alternative site proposals; independent examination into soundness of plan. 		Feb- Mar 06 Apr-May 06 Sept-Oct 06	
	Adoption <ul style="list-style-type: none"> binding report received from inspector; adoption of document; monitoring of implementation and progress against Local Development Scheme. 		Apr 07	Adoption <ul style="list-style-type: none"> adoption of document; monitoring of implementation and progress against Local Development Scheme.

HOW WE WILL KEEP YOU INFORMED

How we will meet the Legal Requirements

To meet the requirements of the Government Regulations we will inform local residents and other groups when documents are published for consultation by:

- making copies available at the Council Offices, Southfields, Loughborough and the Joint Service Shop, County Hall, Glenfield;
- placing copies in libraries throughout the Borough;
- placing copies on the Council's web site (www.charnwood.gov.uk);
- posting notices in the Loughborough Echo and Leicester Mercury for two consecutive weeks;
- notifying as appropriate the groups detailed at Appendix 3;
- informing any person who asks to be notified of the submission of a DPD to the Secretary of State, the publication of an Inspector's report, and the adoption of a DPD or SPD;
- giving notice to objectors of any independent examination into a DPD.

What we could also do:

In addition the Council will aim to ensure that key stakeholders, community groups and local residents are kept informed of progress in preparing the LDF. Some of the ways this could be done include:

Web site- a dedicated page on the Council's web site to provide date information on the preparation of the LDF including forthcoming dates for consultation. Press releases would be posted on the web site. We could also investigate the use of an email alerts system allowing people to sign up to receive email alerts when key consultations are to take place;

Leaflets- leafleting of households and business addresses in the Borough when the Council publishes Preferred Options and Submission versions of DPDs;

Charnwood News- articles and updates on the LDF in Charnwood News, the borough magazine;

The Press/ Local Radio- in addition to the publication of formal notices, press releases at each stage in the preparation of a DPD. These could be sent to the Loughborough Echo, Leicester Mercury, other local newspapers and also Parish Magazines/ newsletters and local radio stations;

Address database- a database of individuals, groups and other interests wishing to be informed when documents are published could be maintained;

Roadshows & Exhibitions- touring the Borough when the Council publishes Preferred Options and Submission versions of DPDs. Exhibitions would display information on the plan proposals and allow members of the public to discuss issues with planning staff. At roadshows there would

be a short presentation and wherever possible lead Councillors would be in attendance alongside planning officers.

The aim would be to hold exhibitions and roadshows at various venues throughout the Borough. Because of the time and staffing implications it would not always be possible to hold exhibitions/roadshows in each parish.

For SPDs the use of roadshows and exhibitions would not always be appropriate. For SPDs providing design guidance for particular sites or areas an exhibition would be held within the local area.

Exhibitions have previously been held in libraries, village halls, community centres and schools. In some instances turnout has been poor. Alternative venues for exhibitions could be considered. A series of evening, daytime and weekend events could also be held.

Posters publicising roadshows and exhibitions could be distributed to Parish Councils and placed in Post Offices and supermarkets.

Charnwood Local Strategic Partnership (CLSP)- regular updates on preparation of the LDF could be reported to meetings of the LSP Board, particularly looking at links with the Community Strategy. Reports could also be presented to the various Forums that have been set up. Information could also be posted on the Charnwood Online web site set up to update progress on the Community Strategy;

Town/ Parish Councils/ Meetings- keeping Town and Parish Councils informed of progress on the Local Development Framework. Training sessions have been held with Town/ Parish Councils and these included an introduction to the Local Development Framework system. Other training sessions could be held as appropriate. Where Town/ Parish Councils are agreeable this information would be provided in electronic format. With the resources available it would not be possible for officers to visit Town/ Parish Councils individually. Instead a series of sessions for groups of Town/ Parish Councils covering parts of the Borough could be held.

Elected Members- It is vital that elected members are fully involved in the preparation of the LDF and are kept informed of progress. All elected members could be kept informed of progress on the LDF and key consultation stages by email and through "The Bulletin". County Councillors would also be kept informed by email.

Early Warning of Consultation periods- The Council understands that it is often difficult for local interest groups and Town/ Parish Councils to respond within the 6-week periods for consultation prescribed in the regulations. The Council's Local Development Scheme will provide information on the timetable for producing the LDF and key dates when residents and stakeholders can expect to be involved. Where possible local groups could be advised of forthcoming consultation exercises in advance to allow them to make the necessary arrangements in order to respond within the formal consultation period. Advance warning would be possible where reports are prepared for consideration by Cabinet and Full Council. Groups could be informed when reports are available and of any provisional timescales for formal consultation. It must be emphasised however that any representations **must** be made during the formal 6-week consultation periods and not before.

Question 1: Are there any other ways we can inform the local community about the LDF?

*Question 2: What types of venue should we use for roadshows/ exhibitions- village halls, libraries, other?
When should they be held- evening/ weekend/ daytime?*

Question 3: Are there any other groups that should be added to Appendix 3?

HOW YOU CAN GET INVOLVED IN HELPING TO DEVELOP OPTIONS AND PROPOSALS?

How we will meet the Legal Requirements:

To meet the requirements of the Government Regulations we will:

- where appropriate consult with key groups and organisations on issues and options arising from initial survey work (see Appendix 3);
- publish for consultation Preferred Options Reports for each DPD- This will allow interested parties to identify other issue and options for the Council to consider before it finalises its ideas and before the production of submission documents.

What we could also do:

Before reaching a decision on the content of Local Development Documents the Council will look to involve the local community and other organisations in developing and discussing issues and options. The most effective way to do this will be to tap in to the wide range of established local groups representing local community and key stakeholder interests. These groups have an important role to play in representing the interests of their local communities. Appendix 3 lists the specific and general consultation bodies the local planning authority must consult in accordance with the regulations. It also lists other bodies, which the Council could consider consulting before developing its preferred options.

Through work on the Community Strategy a Local Strategic Partnership Forum is already established. Members of the Forum cover a wide range of local community groups, local stakeholders, business and voluntary sector interests. Forum events could be used to discuss issues and options in the preparation of key Local Development Documents including the Core Strategy and land allocation proposals. A one-day Local Strategic Partnership Forum event was held to discuss the Issues Report. Similar events could be held to enable options to be presented and discussed.

Local residents and businesses will have the opportunity to contribute through consultation on the Preferred Options report. Leafleting of households and businesses and road shows and exhibitions would ensure that all residents are informed of the Preferred Options reports for each document produced.

Use of Existing Forums:

The Council will also look to use existing Community Forums which have been set up, including the Youth Forum, Health Forum, and Equality Forum. Meetings could be held with these groups to discuss options and proposals as there are developed.

Other Approaches to Participation:

The Council will investigate the use of other approaches to participation in the development of options. These could include the use of Citizen's Panels and Planning for Real. These approaches are explained at Appendix 2.

Information on Planning Aid could also be made available to local groups and individuals. Operated by the Royal Town Planning Institute, Planning Aid provides free and independent advice and support to community groups and individuals.

Question 4: What other approaches should we take to participation?

HOW WE WILL CONSULT YOU WHEN FORMAL PROPOSALS HAVE BEEN PRODUCED:

How we will meet the Legal Requirements:

To meet the requirements of the Government Regulations we will:

- when the Council submits a DPD to the Secretary of State it will be placed on the Council's website and made available for inspection at Council offices, Southfields, County Hall, Glenfield and local libraries throughout the Borough for a 6 week period of consultation. Public notices will be placed in Loughborough Echo and Leicester Mercury on two consecutive weeks;
- representations proposing alternative and/or additional site allocations will be advertised in the same way with a 6 week period for representations on these alternative sites;
- objectors to a submitted DPD will have the right to appear at an independent examination into the document;
- draft SPDs will be placed on the Council's website and made available for inspection at Council offices, Southfields, County Hall, Glenfield and local libraries throughout the Borough for 4-6 weeks. Public notices will be placed in Loughborough Echo and Leicester Mercury on two consecutive weeks.

What we could also do:

To ensure that submission DPDs are widely publicised, households and business addresses in the area could be leafleted. We could also make use of press releases to the local media including Town/ Parish newsletters. In addition to the Council web site, details could be posted on Charnwood Online and the County Council Parish Portal. Objection forms could be made available on the web site for download or completion online.

Roadshows/ Exhibitions- touring the Borough could provide details of the submission document with a brief presentation on key aspects from officers and Lead Members as appropriate.

HOW WE WILL PROVIDE FEEDBACK

It is important that when groups and individuals comment on the preparation of the LDF they are kept informed about how their comments have been considered and what changes have been made as a result of their comments.

How we will meet the Legal Requirements:

To meet the requirements of the Government Regulations we will:

- publish statements detailing the pre-submission consultation and public participation undertaken, the main issues raised in these consultations and how these issues have been addressed;
- these statements will be made available at the Council Offices, Southfields, County Hall, Glenfield, libraries throughout the Borough and on the Council's web site. Copies will also be sent to the bodies specified at Appendix 3 as appropriate;
- publish an annual monitoring report to outline progress against the Local Development Scheme and assessing progress in the implementation of policies. The report will be made available at the Council offices, Southfields, County Hall, Glenfield, libraries throughout the Borough and on the Council's web site.

What we could also do:

In addition the Council could use meetings with local groups and organisations to provide feedback on how comments have been addressed. Articles could also be included in Charnwood News and circulated to Parish Councils for posting on their web sites.

<i>Question 5: Are there any other ways we can provide feedback on our response to comments received?</i>

SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL

In preparing the LDF the Council must undertake a sustainability appraisal which incorporates the requirements of the EC Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive. The appraisal will assess the social, environmental and economic effects of policies and proposals as the LDF is produced. The aim is to ensure that decisions help contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. The sustainability appraisal will take place alongside the preparation of the plan and there will be opportunities for consultation at key stages in the preparation of the appraisal.

In preparing the sustainability appraisal the Council will:

- consult key stakeholders on the scope of the sustainability appraisal, key issues and options;
 - consult key stakeholders and the public on issues and options and the initial sustainability report;
 - undertake public consultation on the final sustainability report along with the preferred options.
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CONSULTING ON PLANNING APPLICATIONS

As well as outlining the consultation procedures for the preparation of the Local Development framework, the SCI also sets out how the Council will consult on planning applications.

The statutory requirements for publicity in relation to applications for planning permission are set out in various regulations and acts¹. These require applications to be publicised by way of a notice in a local newspaper, a site notice or by neighbour notification letter. Different types of application require different methods of publicity.

How we will meet the Legal Requirements:

To meet the legal requirements for consultation on planning applications we will:

✓ For applications accompanied by an Environmental Statement (EA schedule 1 or 2), proposals that depart from the local plan or development that affects a public right of way to which Part III of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 applies:	Place a notice in the Loughborough Echo or the Leicester Mercury inviting comments within 21 days; and post a site notice inviting comment within 21 days
✓ Major development (10 or more dwellings, 1,000 sq m of floorspace or 0.5hectares site area):	Place a notice in the Loughborough Echo or the Leicester Mercury inviting comments within 21 days; and either post a site notice or notify neighbours by letter inviting comment within 21 days
✓ Other development:	Post a site notice or notify neighbours by letter inviting comment within 21 days
✓ Development affecting a setting of a listed building:	Place a notice in the Loughborough Echo or the Leicester Mercury inviting comment within 21 days; and post a site notice inviting comment within 7 days
✓ Development affecting the character or appearance of a conservation area:	Place a notice in the Loughborough Echo and Leicester Mercury inviting comment within 21 days; and post a site notice inviting comment within 21 days

¹ General Development Procedure Order 1995, Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Area) Act 1990, and the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Area) Regulations 1990.

What we could also do:

The Council already exceeds the minimum requirements for publicity and consultation on planning applications set out in the regulations. The Development Control Charter 2001 outlined the Council's code of practice for publicising planning applications. Appendix 4 includes an update of the charter dealing with publicity and consultation arrangements for planning applications. The weekly list of planning applications is circulated to parish councils and other groups and is placed on the Council's web site. The web site is being developed to allow viewing of application details online. For applications that may have wider implications, one or more site notices will be posted and, in addition, letters may be sent to occupiers of properties close to but not bounding the site.

Arrangements for public speaking at Plans Committees are in place and have proved to be successful.

For a number of larger applications the Council has worked successfully with developers to involve local communities through the consideration of applications. This has involved presentations to local community groups by developers and meetings with community representatives to discuss the content of section 106 agreements.

For developments that may be locally controversial, are on sensitive sites or are significant in scale, it is considered that local communities should have additional opportunities to be informed about and comment on proposals. In these instances developers could be encouraged to consult with the local community before submitting a planning application.

Developers could be encouraged to use a range of approaches for pre- application discussions including public meetings, workshops, consultation groups and Enquiry by Design. The "Enquiry by Design" approach invites stakeholders in a proposed development – the local authority, residents, developers, landowners, voluntary groups, representatives of employers and retailers, to collaborate in producing a plan for the development masterplan.

Question 6: Are there any other ways we can inform you of planning applications that may affect you?

Question 7: What types of development should developers be encouraged to consult with the local community on before they submit an application?

TARGET GROUPS AND CONTACTS

The analysis of previous consultation exercises has indicated that, whilst the Council has been successful in involving some key groups in the preparation of planning policy, it has had difficulty in engaging with certain groups- particularly under represented groups including ethnic minority interests and youth groups.

The range of groups that the Council will aim to engage in the preparation of the LDF include:

- the general public;
- statutory consultees;
- local interest groups;

- national interest groups;
- landowners;
- developers and agents;
- the business community;
- adjoining local authorities;
- Town/ Parish Council's/ Meetings;
- The Charnwood Local Strategic Partnership;
- Ethnic minority interests;
- Youth groups;
- Faith Groups;
- People with disabilities.

Involving Hard to Reach Groups:

The Council is committed to engaging as wide a range of groups and interests in the planning process. In the preparation of the Borough of Charnwood Local Plan there was difficulty in engaging with youth groups, ethnic minority interests and also residents within particular wards within Loughborough.

Work on the Community Cohesion Pathfinder initiative provides the opportunity to work with these under represented groups to build the capacity for their involvement in the preparation of the LDF. There are particular issues associated with certain Wards within Loughborough that fall within some of the most deprived wards in Leicestershire and also contain large ethnic minority communities. These wards are subject to a number of interrelated spatial planning issues that will need to be addressed in the preparation of the LDF. Through funding from the Leicestershire Economic Partnership, work is proposed to help build the capacity within these communities to engage more effectively in planning issues that affect them.

To seek to involve young people in the planning process, the Council intends to build on work already undertaken with the Youth Forum. A presentation on the Issues Paper was made to the Youth Forum and it is intended that they are involved in key participation and consultation stages. Information will also be provided to local schools in the Borough so that they are aware of work on the LDF.

For all documents produced an informative will be included indicating that copies are available on request in Braille, large print, translations and audio format. We will aim to produce documents that are easily understood. Where technical terms and phrases need to be used a glossary will be provided.

<i>Question 8: Are there any other groups that we should identify?</i>
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Question 9: Are there any other ways we can target hard to reach groups?

LINKS BETWEEN THE LDF AND THE COMMUNITY STRATEGY

The Council recognises the important links between the LDF and the Community Strategy. The Issues Paper produced to launch work on the LDF looked at how work on the LDF could deliver the aspirations of the Community Strategy.

The Community Strategy was published in 2003. A review of the strategy is about to commence. Where possible consultation on the LDF will be linked with consultation exercises proposed for the Community Strategy.

LINKS WITH OTHER CORPORATE STRATEGIES

There are also important links with other Council strategies including the Corporate Strategy and the Economic Development Strategy. As well as providing a relevant policy context for the preparation of the LDF, consultation on these documents provide useful information on local issues and concerns. We will take account of comments received from these other consultation exercises in the identification of issues and options for the LDF.

RESOURCES

Successful engagement of the local community can be a time consuming exercise and, depending on the methods used can be expensive. Appendix 2 provides an assessment of various consultation methods and provides an indication of costs based on past experience. The Planning Policy Team will lead consultation exercises on the LDF. Where appropriate the team will be assisted by the Council's Communications Team, the Policy Unit and external consultants and facilitators.

MONITORING

It is important that the approach to engaging the local community in the preparation of the LDF is monitored to ensure it is effective. The Council will review the SCI and through questionnaire feedback seek comments on the consultation and engagement methods used. Where necessary amendments to the SCI will be brought forward.

CRITERIA FOR TESTING SOUNDNESS

Does the Statement of Community Involvement:

- Show that the LPA is meeting the legal requirements;
- Set out the LPA strategy for community involvement and its links with other community involvement initiatives, e.g. the local authority's community strategy;
- Identify in general terms which local community groups and other bodies need to be consulted;
- Show how local people, community groups and other bodies can be involved in a timely and accessible manner;
- Show that the methods to be used to involve local people, community groups and other bodies are suitable for the different stages in the preparation of the LPAs local development documents and for particular communities;
- Show that the LPA can resource and manage the process effectively;
- Show how the results of the community involvement are to be fed into the preparation of development plan documents and supplementary planning documents; and
- Set out the mechanisms for reviewing the procedures in the SCI.

Source: Local Development Frameworks- Guide to Procedures and Code of Practice.

Review of Consultation Procedures:

Procedure	Strengths	Weaknesses	Costs
Exhibitions/ Roadshow:	Good way of reaching large numbers if well located; Allows residents to raise issues directly with officers/ councillors	If venue is poor turnout will be low; Resource intensive if permanently staffed; Response hard to record unless people return representation forms.	Hire of Room- £30-50 per venue. Cost of publicity Cost of Display material.
Leafleting of households/ businesses	Best way to get information across to all residents and businesses	Can be seen as junk mail and discarded;	Royal Mail Door to Door- £45 per 1,000: Based on 80,000 addresses- £3.600
Press Release	Can provide wide publicity of proposals and can be positive.	Cannot guarantee that press will report; No editorial control.	None
Charnwood News	Reaches all households; Editorial control.	Twice yearly publication schedule means that it may not coincide with LDF consultation periods; Long lead in for articles.	Limited if part of existing publication schedule. Special edition would be costly.
Public Notices	In theory can reach a wide audience.	Unlikely to be read widely.	£200 approx per notice.
Posters	Can be cheap and provide a wide coverage.	Only limited information can be presented.	Low cost
Community Workshops	Experience from LSP Forum Event shows they can be a successful approach; Can enable a detailed discussion of issues.	Need to be carefully planned; Audience can be dominated by activists- need to ensure a good spread of interests; Trained facilitators likely to be required.	Can be expensive: Room hire: £2,000-£3,000 Facilitator: £1,000-£2,000
Website	Cheap way of keeping people informed.	Currently limited audience; Unlikely to access hard to reach groups.	Low cost
Presentations to established Forums	Good way of accessing particular interests and issues.	Need to tailor work to their interest. Need to ensure feedback.	Relatively cheap
Surveys/ Questionnaires	Can gain views of representative sample of population. By interview in depth views can be	Postal response can be low;	Preparing questions; Cost of interviewers/ analysis;

Review of Consultation Procedures:

Procedure	Strengths	Weaknesses	Costs
	obtained; Possible to use approaches already established.		
Citizen Panel A citizens panel of around 1,600 residents is established in Charnwood	Could be used to investigate key issues/themes	Few young people on panel; More suited to discussion of broad strategic options.	Preparation and analysis of questions.
Citizen Jury: Small group 10-15 attend 2-4 day session to hear evidence and discuss issues.	Allows a detailed debate on issues and options.	Need to ensure representative; Costly and time consuming.	Other authorities have estimated costs of £16,000-£20,000
Planning for Real® Uses simple models as a focus for people to put forward ideas on how their area should be improved.	Can be a useful way of getting an understanding of local issues and concerns. The Council have previously commissioned 5 Planning for Real® exercises in the Borough so have experience of this approach.	Needs to be organised carefully. May be more suited to specific local issues. Requires concerted follow up to show actions and results. Can be time consuming.	Estimated costs of £6,000 per event.

Appendix 3: List of Specific and General Consultation Bodies

What the Regulations Require:

Regulation 25 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004 requires local planning authorities to consult with those specific consultation bodies that may be affected by a DPD, and those general consultation bodies they consider appropriate. These bodies are listed below:

I. SPECIFIC CONSULTATION BODIES

East Midlands Regional Assembly
Leicestershire County Council
Nottinghamshire County Council
Leicester City Council
North West Leicestershire District Council
Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council
Melton Borough Council
Harborough District Council
Blaby District Council
Rushcliffe Borough Council

Parish Councils within or adjoining

Charnwood:

Anstey Parish Council
Bardon Parish Council
Barkby Parish Council
Barrow upon Soar Parish Council
Beeby Parish Meeting
Belton Parish Council
Birstall Parish Council
Burton/Cotes & Prestwold Parish Council
Cossington Parish Council
Costock Parish Council
East Goscote Parish Council
East Leake Parish Council
Glenfield Parish Council
Groby Parish Council
Hathern Parish Council
Hickling Parish Council
Hoton Parish Council
Keyham Parish Council
Kingston on Soar Parish Council
Long Whatton Parish Council
Markfield Parish Council
Mountsorrel Parish Council
Newtown Linford Parish Council
Normanton on Soar Parish Council
Queniborough Parish Council
Quorn Parish Council
Ratcliffe on the Wreake Parish Meeting
Rearsby Parish Council
Rempstone Parish Council
Rothley Parish Council
Scraptoft Parish Council

Seagrave Parish Council
Shepshed Town Council
Sileby Parish Council
South Croxton Parish Council
Stanford on Soar Parish Council
Sutton Bonington Parish Council
Swithland Parish Meeting
Syston Town Council
Thrussington Parish Council
Thurcaston & Cropston Parish Council
Thurmaston Parish Council
Twyford and Thorpe Parish Council
Ulverscroft Parish Meeting
Walton on the Wolds Parish Council
Wanlip Parish Meeting
Willoughby on the Wolds Parish Council
Woodhouse Parish Council
Wymeswold Parish Council
Wysall & Thorpe in the Glebe Parish Council

The Countryside Agency
The Environment Agency
Highways Agency
English Heritage
English Nature
Strategic Rail Authority
East Midlands Development Agency
British Telecom (Leicester)
British Telecommunications Plc
Mobile Phone Operators Association
Strategic Health Authority
British Gas Connections Ltd
British Gas Properties
National Grid Transco
Powergen
Transco Plc
Severn Trent Water Limited

2. GENERAL CONSULTATION BODIES

Bodies representing different racial, ethnic or national or religious groups; disabled interests; business interests; voluntary bodies:

ACERT
Association of Charnwood Tenants
Bangladesh Social Association
Business Link
Charnwood Bangladeshi Society
Charnwood Council for Voluntary Service
Charnwood Disability Forum
Charnwood Ethnic Minority Forum
Charnwood Learning Disability Action Group
Charnwood & North West Leicestershire PCT
Charnwood Racial Equality Council
Churches Together in Loughborough

Appendix 3: List of Specific and General Consultation Bodies

Emmanuel, Loughborough and St Mary-in-Charnwood, Nanpantan
Geeta Bhawan
House Builders Federation - Eastern Region
Leicestershire and Rutland Community Council
Leicestershire Chamber of Commerce & Industry
Loughborough Chamber of Trade & Commerce
Loughborough Council of Faiths
Loughborough Jansari Centre
Loughborough Mosque & Islamic Cultural Association
Loughborough University
National Housing Federation
RNIB Vocational College
Rural Community Council
Rural Housing Trust
Shree Ram Krishna Community Association
Sikh Temple
Sriniketan Cultural Association

3. OTHER CONSULTATION BODIES:

In addition to consultation with the above groups required by the Regulations, where appropriate the Council will also consult with the following groups and organisations before publishing its Preferred Options. This list may change as groups form and disband:

Action for a Better Charnwood
Age Concern
Ashby Road Estates Community Association
British Waterways
CABE
Central Networks
Central Trains
Centre for Ecology & Hydrology
Church Commissioners for England
Civil Aviation Authority
Commission for Racial Equality
CPRE Charnwood
CPRE Leicestershire
Disability Rights Commission
English Partnerships
Fearon Hall Community Association
Forestry Commission
Friends of Charnwood Forest
Friends of the Earth
Gorse Covert Community Association
Hastings Community Association
Health & Safety Executive
Help the Aged
Housing Corporation
Kinchbus

Leicester & Rutland Wildlife Trust
Leicester City Bus
Leicester Diocesan Board of Finance
Leicestershire Constabulary - Architectural Liaison
Leicestershire Fire & Rescue Service
Leicestershire Learning & Skills Council
Leicestershire Leicester & Rutland Sport
Leics & Rutland Trust for Nature Conservation
Loughborough & District Civic Trust
Loughborough Naturalists Group
Loughborough Urban Forum
Mariners Quay Residents Association
Midland Mainline Limited
National Express Group plc
National Playing Fields Association
Network Rail
Nottingham City Transport
Nottingham East Midlands Airport
Paul James Coaches
Polish Community Centre
Post Office, Town Planning & Legislation Unit
Rail Freight Group
Ramblers Association
Regional Housing Board
Resident Groups and Associations including:
Gorse Covert Community Association
Hastings Community Association
Storer Road and Rosebery Street Community Association
Storer and Ashby Area Residents Association
St Peters Community Association
Herrick Road, Moor Lane, Haydon Road, & Ratcliffe Road/ Burder Street Residents Associations
Road Haulage Association
RSPB (Central England Offices)
RSPB Loughborough & District Group
Shelthorpe Community Association
South Notts Bus Company Limited
Sport England
St Peters Community Association
Storer Rd & Rosebery St Community Assoc
The Crown Estate
The Gypsy Council
Transport 2000
Traveller Law Reform Coalition
Women's National Commission
Woods Coaches
Woodland Trust

Appendix 4: Revised Development Control Charter

Publicity Arrangements

Planning law requires us to publicise all planning applications and most other types of application. This is to make sure people can comment on new development proposed in the area. The law sets out the general procedures which we must follow. However, we have adopted procedures that give wider publicity to planning and other applications than the law requires. This is because we want to make sure people have a proper chance to comment on proposals which affect them.

This code of practice applies to all planning and other applications decided by the Borough Council. It also applies to applications made by the Council.

All applications are the subject of notification by letter addressed to the owners/occupiers of properties that adjoin planning application sites, where such properties are identifiable.

Where an application involves development that is of such a scale that it might impact upon non-immediately adjacent properties, notification letters will be sent to those properties.

Site notices are posted for proposals that are considered to have a wider impact and/or be of wider public interest and/or where an address for the owner/occupier of adjacent land or property is not apparent.

Site Notices and Newspaper Advertising are carried out for the following applications:

- Proposals involving external alterations to a listed building;
- Proposals that may affect the setting of a listed building;
- Proposals that may affect the character and appearance of a conservation area;
- Proposals where an “environmental statement” is needed;
- Proposals involving a departure from policies of the “development plan”;
- Proposals involving a right of way;
- Proposals for “major development”;
- Proposals which are likely to raise significant public interest;

Site notices are posted in locations where they are easily visible. They are printed on weatherproof material.

Newspaper advertising is by means of notices inserted in the Loughborough Echo for applications made in the northern part of the Borough and in the Leicester Mercury for applications made in the southern part.

Inspection of Applications

All planning and other applications can be inspected in the Council Offices at Southfields in Loughborough. The office is open from 8.30am to 5.00pm on Mondays to Thursdays and 8.30am to 4.30pm on Fridays. Applications can be discussed with the planner dealing with that application by prior arrangement.

Appendix 4: Revised Development Control Charter

Making Comments

Comments must be made within 21 days. This period runs from the date of display of any site notice or newspaper advertisement or from the date of any neighbour notification letter. However, the period is sometimes reduced where publicity relates to amendments to a proposal or to application types that must be decided in less than 8 weeks.

The Council does not normally acknowledge the receipt of representations. Provided they raise planning issues about the proposal, all comments are taken into account when the application is decided.

Other Publicity

The Planning Service publishes a list of planning applications received each week on the Council's web site.

The Council may arrange, or be represented at, public meetings to discuss controversial or major planning applications.

Other methods of publicising planning applications may be used at the discretion of the Development Control Manager.

Our Standard

When we publicise a planning application, we will follow the code of practice set out above.
